

PORTRAIT AND
BIOGRAPHICAL



OF

KNOX COUNTY, ILLINOIS,

CONTAINING

Full Page Portraits and Biographical Sketches of Prominent
and Representative Citizens of the County,

TOGETHER WITH

PORTRAITS AND BIOGRAPHIES OF ALL THE GOVERNORS OF ILLINOIS, AND
OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES.

Also Containing a History of the County from its Earliest Settlement
Up to the Present Time.


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Aaron W. Olmsted is the husband of Ettie Robbins and their family circle numbers four children, namely, Lester, Harry, Paul and Blanche; Mary C. Olmsted became the wife of Alexander Harry Gordon, and to them four children have been born—Arthur, Effie, John and James P. Stephen Edgar Olmsted was an Orderly in the 7th Ill. Cav., in the War of the Rebellion. He was taken ill, and died at the age of 25 years, in 1862, from typhoid fever contracted while in Camp Butler, Springfield, Ill. Reuben died at the age of six years, and Osman died when an infant of nine weeks.

Our subject and wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which denomination he is Trustee and Steward. In politics the entire family adheres to the principles of the Republican party. Mr. Olmsted has served Copley Township as Assessor for four consecutive years, and is one of the prominent men of Victoria Township.



Simeon L. Collinson. Among the most substantial business men and best known farmers of Walnut Grove Township is Mr. Collinson, who has always maintained a position entitling him to the confidence and good will of the community. He is now retired and resides on section 25, in this township. He was born in Yorkshire, England, July 7, 1806. His father was a farmer in the same county and died at the age of 82 years, at that place, after the son was grown to manhood.

The gentleman whose name graces this history spent his early days in farm life in England until his 25th year, when he emigrated to the United States, embarking Nov. 4, 1831. He was seven weeks and five days crossing the Atlantic, and landed at New York City. In January of the following year he proceeded to Luzerne County, Pa., and took up his abode in Wilkesbarre. In 1838 he first came to Knox County, where he has remained ever since, becoming one of the wealthiest land-owners in the district. At a period not long ago he owned not less than 2,400 acres of good land, and gave to each of his children by his first wife 200 acres of this, improved. To one child by his last wife he deeded 300 acres. His farm at present consists of 200 acres of improved property.

Much of his land has been worked up to its present state of cultivation from originally unbroken prairie land, indicating an energy and perseverance in Mr. Collinson not often met with.

He was first married in Pennsylvania to Mary M. Craver. She was a German lady and born in that State. After a short illness she died at her home in this township, April 18, 1874, aged 61 years and 28 days. She was an earnest and thorough helpmate to Mr. C., a careful mother, and respected near and far by those who knew her best. Mr. Collinson's family consists of eight children, who evince to the observer the good bringing up and careful Christian training of devoted parents.

His marriage with Mrs. Jane McClure, *nee* Carnahan, in Victoria Township, was an event of much interest and took place Nov. 1, 1874. This amiable lady was born in Scotland, Sept. 17, 1837, and arrived in the United States in July, 1867, and at once settled at Altona, Knox County. She is the mother of one child by the latter union, named Ernest T., born October 17, 1875. By her first marriage she has had three children, one deceased. The two now living are named Robert and Thomas. The family are attendants of the Methodist Episcopal Church, where they are held in high esteem. Almost all the offices in connection with the township have been ably filled from time to time by Mr. Collinson. He was Assessor during the first two years after the organization of the township of Walnut Grove. His political convictions are in the fullest sense Democratic, his consistent attachment to principle in this regard winning him the good will of the party.


Samuel O. Stevens, one of the representative men of Walnut Grove Township, is a resident of his farm of 150 acres, situated on section 30. This gentleman was born in Castile, Oneida County, N. Y., on the 24th of July, 1830. His father, Orange Stevens, was a native of Connecticut and married Pamela Belden, who was from Oneida County, N. Y.

Mr. Stevens was the oldest but one of six children, two sons and four daughters. Three of these daughters and one son survive. His father followed the calling of tanner, currier and shoemaker, in which

business he operated successfully. When our subject was five years old, the whole family went to Pennsylvania, and in the year 1835 they settled in Erie County. It was only two years subsequent to this that the father was accidentally killed by the falling of a tree while chopping in the woods. His death took place in September, 1837. The mother, being an educated lady, became a proficient teacher, and practiced medicine for a number of years before her death, which occurred in Galesburg, Ill. Many prominent students of Illinois, now grown to man and womanhood, will remember her genial disposition and earnestness as a teacher. Her arrival in Chicago occurred in 1839, when she first came from Pennsylvania. Finally the family arrived in Knox County, and, to maintain her family, Mrs. Stevens took up the occupation of teacher in the public school. Her family were educated by her own efforts.

Mr. Stevens received his education at Knox College, Galesburg, Ill. With his two sisters, he commenced teaching while yet young, attaining to proficiency in his 17th year. At 14 he had attained to great proficiency in mathematics, and at Galesburg assisted in this department. Up to the year 1831 he vigorously pursued his profession as teacher, in connection with farming. In this capacity his success has been assured beyond a doubt. The mother of this gentleman died at Center Point in 1859.

Mr. Stevens was married in Galesburg, Ill., Nov. 25, 1851, to Miss Marinda Burge, who was a native of Lorain County, Ohio, and born September 15, 1831. She was the daughter of Dr. Adam and Marinda (Close) Burge, both natives of New York State. Her mother's decease took place in Sullivan, Lorain County, Ohio, in 1833. The present lady was her mother's only daughter and came to Illinois in her seventh year in 1838, and she has since been a resident in Knox County. In Galesburg she received her education and began teaching in her 18th year, which profession she pursued for three years. She has been the happy mother of ten children, one of whom is deceased; Adella is the wife of Leslie W. Close, a grain-dealer, who resides at Deer Creek, Minn.; Orange B. married Amanda Stake and lives in Page County, Iowa; has for several years been engaged in teaching; Martha O. is the wife of Albert Wallace Kendall, a farmer of Garden City, Blue Earth County, Minn.; Arthur A. is now in Lincoln,

Neb., and a teacher by profession; Edwin L. is in Western Kansas; Mary A. is engaged in dressmaking and resides at home; Addie E., a milliner, also residing at home; Alva R. and Minnie E. are at home, and Frank E. is deceased.

The family are connected with the Congregational Church at Oneida. Politically, Mr. Stevens may be numbered among the solid Republicans of his vicinity.

William Main is a general farmer and stock-raiser on section 8 of Walnut Grove Township. He was born in Ayrshire, Scotland, on the 12th of May, 1845. The history of his parentage is referred to at length in our sketch of Andrew Main. After the death of our subject's mother, he came with his father and other members of the family to the United States.

Mr. Main was the oldest of his parents' children. About one year after his father came to this country, locating as already stated, William set out to make his own living. In July, 1862, he enlisted in the cause of the Union, joining the 102d Ill. Vol. Inf., Co. I, Capt. E. H. Conger. He participated in the battles of Resaca, Dalton, Cassville, New Hope, Burnt Hickory and Lost Mountain; also Peach Tree Creek and the siege in and around Atlanta. In Savannah, Ga., he also saw some active service, and subsequently at Bentonville, which closed the list of principal battles.

In all these our subject escaped unhurt. For a brief time he was detained as forager, and was discharged June 15, 1865; returning again to Illinois, he engaged with his old employer, Abraham Clearwater, of Ontario Township, for whom he had previously worked eight years. In company with his brother Andrew, he purchased his first land, a tract of 160 acres. The latter now lives in this township. The present farm of 160 acres was purchased in 1875. This is in an exceedingly high state of cultivation, and his success as a farmer has made itself apparent in almost every department in which he has had a hand.

On the 19th of February, 1873, he was married at the home of the bride's parents, in Walnut Grove Township, to Ann, daughter of Hugh Andrews (referred to in our biographies of Hugh and John

Ohio, in an independent cavalry company. For three months he held the office of Second Lieutenant, afterward commanding. The State of Ohio in the meantime tried to force them to become infantry, which they were determined not to do. Thereupon the officers telegraphed to Gov. Pierpont, of West Virginia, who welcomed them, and they became the 2d W. Va. Cav. Our subject was mustered in as a private, elected to the office of First Lieutenant of Co. B, by a unanimous vote. He was soon afterward promoted to Captain, and then to Major of his regiment. He served in the 1st West Virginia Corps, fighting at Shenandoah Valley, at the battles of Winchester, Cedar Creek and other important engagements. His service covered about three years and three months in the 2d Cav., and he was five months among the "three-months men."

Leaving the army, he began steamboating on the Mississippi as Clerk and Captain between St. Paul and New Orleans, and was thus engaged for six or seven years. He then came to Galesburg, in 1873, and, taking charge of the Union Hotel, conducted it for three years.

Maj. Hambleton was born in Lawrence County, Ohio, April 7, 1839, and was well educated, receiving superior advantages and attending Athens University, Ohio, where he became proficient in the study of law, but never practiced it. He is the head of a family, is a Knight Templar in the Masonic fraternity and is also associated with the I. O. O. F.

Marcus Belden, one of the pioneer grain-dealers of Galesburg, was born at Greenfield, Saratoga Co., N. Y., April 1, 1815. In 1825 the family removed to Western New York, and from there to Knox County in 1840. The Beldens were principally farmers, though a few of them are found in various pursuits and professions throughout the country.

The subject of our sketch was the eldest son of Aaron and Sarah (Wood) Belden, who were married at Greenfield, N. Y., in the year 1812. The names of the other children are, Martha, born Oct. 20, 1816; Joel W., Jan. 22, 1821; Priscilla, Feb. 9, 1823; Clarissa, Aug. 20, 1825, and Harriet N., Nov. 1, 1832. The first ancestor of Mr. Belden of whom

we have any account at this writing was William, who was born in Connecticut, Jan. 22, 1741. He married in that colony, while yet a young man, Miss Priscilla Crawford, and removed to Ballston Springs, N. Y., where the first child, Sarah, was born Sept. 12, 1770. From Ballston Springs he removed to a place afterward known as Greenfield, near Saratoga Springs, where he improved a farm, upon which he spent the remainder of his life. His children were Sarah, before mentioned; William J., Jr., born April 5, 1772; Anna, Sept. 23, 1773; Daniel, Dec. 9, 1775; Zenas, Aug. 9, 1778; Azor, Aug. 16, 1779; Simeon, June 9, 1782; David, Feb. 28, 1784; Moses, March 8, 1786; Aaron, May 27, 1788, and John, Aug. 11, 1790. Aaron Belden died at his farm south of Galesburg, July 27, 1860, aged 72 years, and his widow, who was born Oct. 11, 1792, died Oct. 26, 1870.

William Belden was the first settler at Greenfield, N. Y.; in fact, that town grew up around him. He was a soldier under Col. George Washington in the war which broke out between England and France in 1756, and was of the surveying party that marked the line of march through the wilderness against Fort Duquesne (now Pittsburg, Pa.) in 1758; was with the "Father of his Country" during the seven years' struggle for liberty. He lived to a ripe old age, always refused a pension, saying "that he was enjoying the fruits of his labors from day to day as he breathed the air of liberty, and saw around him the happy faces of the 'free.'"

Marcus Belden received a limited education at the district schools of Wyoming County, N. Y., where he spent his boyhood days. Though an active business man at this writing (June, 1886), his memory dates back to the times in the history of our country that to younger ears sounds like romance. He witnessed the construction of the first brick house ever erected at Saratoga Springs; he remembers Mary Jamison, the famous woman chief of the Gardow Indians, and saw her married to Red Jacket at Seneca.

Mr. Belden was married at Neponset, Ill., April 21, 1846, to Miss Ann Norton, a native of England. She died April 7, 1856, leaving four children, namely: Sarah, born April 4, 1847, died Sept. 1, 1867; Harriet, died in infancy; Frances Ann, April 13, 1853, died Sept. 7, 1869, and Priscilla, Sept. 1, 1851, died Dec. 21, 1883. July 26, 1857, Mr. Belden was again married, the lady being Miss Lovisa B. Rigby. The four children born to them are Chas. H., born